

# Universal Credit: advice and support in Islington

## A reference guide for Islington Council staff and partners

June 2018

From 20 June 2018, new claimants for housing benefit and some who already receive this benefit and whose circumstances change will have to apply for Universal Credit.

Claimants must apply for Universal Credit online.

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### **Please help us support our residents:**

If you know of any additional support in Islington which should be listed in this guide, please email [sara.cross@islington.gov.uk](mailto:sara.cross@islington.gov.uk) with the details.

## What changes in circumstance will trigger a move to Universal Credit?

<b>Change in employment status</b>	<b>Change in family circumstances</b>	<b>Other</b>
Move from working more than 16 hours to less than 16 hours	Household becomes responsible for a child for the first time	New / underlying entitlement to legacy benefit
Move from out of work to sick	Change of address in the relevant postcode area that requires a new claim to HB	Attending court / jury service
Move from sick to out of work	Out of work lone parent becomes couple parent	Ceased full time education
Move from sick to working more than 16 hours	Out of work couple parent with child under 5 becomes lone parent	Remanded in custody
Move from in work to reduces number of hours to sick	Partner leaving / joining household	Income and / or capital goes over threshold
	Claimant is within 11 weeks of birth of child	Take on full time caring responsibilities
	Out of work lone parent's child reaches the age of 5	Claimant is no longer a full time carer

## Who can help with making an application / IT skills / getting online?

Organisation	Support available
Customer Centre (Zone C) 222 Upper Street N1 1XR	Computers available, staff to assist with getting online and making the application
Citizen's Advice (CA) 222 Upper Street, N1 1XR  T 0300 330 1197	Digital support available  <a href="http://www.islingtoncab.org">www.islingtoncab.org</a>
Islington libraries	10 branches, 127 computers, scanning and printing facilities, staff support  <a href="http://www.islington.gov.uk/libraries-arts-and-heritage/libraries">www.islington.gov.uk/libraries-arts-and-heritage/libraries</a>
Job Centre Plus 1 Barnsbury Road, N1 0EX 52-53 Medina Road, N7 7JY  T 0845 604 3719 / 0345 604 3719	Computers and digital support available
Adult Community Learning	Courses on computer skills, preparing for work and employment support  <a href="http://adultlearning.islington.gov.uk">http://adultlearning.islington.gov.uk</a>

### Universal Credit helpline: 0800 328 5644 (Freephone)

If claimants have an illness or disability which will make the interview process difficult reasonable adjustments can be made.

## Who can help resolve issues with the Universal Credit application?

- Job Centre Plus
- Universal Credit Service Centre – if issues are not being resolved by the service centre in a timely / satisfactory manner contact [stephenpilmoor1@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:stephenpilmoor1@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)
- Citizen's Advice [www.islingtoncab.org](http://www.islingtoncab.org)
- Islington Law Centre – assist with issues with welfare benefits and a form filling clinic [www.islingtonlaw.org.uk](http://www.islingtonlaw.org.uk) 38 Devonia Road, N1 8JH [info@islingtonlaw.org.uk](mailto:info@islingtonlaw.org.uk) 0207 288 7630 [eveningadvice@islingtonlaw.org.uk](mailto:eveningadvice@islingtonlaw.org.uk) 0207 288 7633 (Mon – Wed, 7-9pm)
- The claimant's support workers (if applicable)

**Please keep income teams at the three area offices up to date with how claims are progressing, so they know about any delays.**

### What happens next?

Within 7 days of making a claim for Universal Credit, claimants need to make an appointment at their Job Centre Plus. They will be given a telephone number to call to arrange the interview and will be told what documents they need to take with them.

The interview will be with a member of staff who will become their work coach. They will discuss their personal circumstances and be placed into a work group with different tasks to do to prepare for work, depending on their capabilities.

They will sign a 'claimant commitment' setting out what they agree to do in exchange for receiving Universal Credit. This will be reviewed regularly and may change if their circumstances change. They should ensure that their claimant commitment is realistic and achievable or they risk getting sanctioned.

The interview will set out what claimants need to do to improve their circumstances. Islington Council offers a great deal of advice and support to claimants - those who live in council homes and those who rent privately.

## Who offers support with finding work?

- **Team Islington:** there are over 80 employment support providers in Islington – any referrals for support finding work will be sent directly to the iWork service who will refer out to the different providers depending on capacity and the type of support required.

**iWORK** 0207 527 2706 [iwork@Islington.gov.uk](mailto:iwork@Islington.gov.uk)

- **The Income Maximisation (IMAX) team** can advise on how residents' income will be affected by Universal Credit.

0800 731 8081 / 0207 527 4990 [claimit@Islington.gov.uk](mailto:claimit@Islington.gov.uk)

## Who offers personal budgeting advice and support?

Organisation	Support offered
Citizens Advice 222 Upper Street  T 0300 330 1197	Advice offered over the phone, by e-mail or an appointment can be made to see ad advisor.  <a href="http://www.islingtoncab.org">www.islingtoncab.org</a>
Money Advice Service  T 0800 138 7777	Free and impartial advice offered on the website, over the telephone or via webchat  <a href="http://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk">www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk</a>
Money Saving Expert	Advice offered on the website  <a href="http://www.moneysavingexpert.com">www.moneysavingexpert.com</a>
Adult Community Learning	A variety of different courses offered  <a href="http://adultlearning.islington.gov.uk">http://adultlearning.islington.gov.uk</a>
Housing Income Teams	Received training from Citizens Advice and can offer advice during home visits and other times that they have contact with tenants.
Partners for Improvement in Islington  E <a href="mailto:enquiries@partnersislington.net">enquiries@partnersislington.net</a> T 0207 288 8310 / 0800 587 3595	Partners tenants can visit their Tenancy Sustainment Officer for advice on personal budgeting  <a href="https://www.partnersislington.net">https://www.partnersislington.net</a>

## Who offers debt advice?

Organisation	Advice offered
Islington Advice Line, Islington Advice Alliance E <a href="mailto:admin@rcjadvice.org.uk">admin@rcjadvice.org.uk</a> T 0300 330 1197	Advice and support for Islington residents experiencing debt
Citizen's Advice - 222 Upper Street T 0300 330 1197	Debt and money advice on their website  <a href="http://www.islingtoncab.org">www.islingtoncab.org</a>
Islington People's Rights 6-9 Manor Gardens, N7 6LA E <a href="mailto:info@ipradvice.org.uk">info@ipradvice.org.uk</a> T 0207 561 3685 Mon, Tues & Fri 2-4pm	Free welfare benefits advice, 70% of clients identify as disabled
Shine	Support with bills and energy debt  <a href="http://www.islington.gov.uk/shine">www.islington.gov.uk/shine</a>
Resident Support Scheme	Fund that can help if you are facing extreme hardship but does not come in the form of cash payments  <a href="http://www.islington.gov.uk/residentsupportscheme">www.islington.gov.uk/residentsupportscheme</a>
Credit Union – The Jeremy Hopgood Rooms, Caxton House, 129 St John's Way N19 3RQ E <a href="mailto:info@creditunion.coop">info@creditunion.coop</a> T 0207 561 1786	Encourages saving as a way of preventing debt. Gives information and support to those struggling with debt  <a href="http://www.creditunion.coop/">www.creditunion.coop/</a>
QSA Moneytalk Islington E <a href="mailto:madeofmoney@qsa.org.uk">madeofmoney@qsa.org.uk</a> T 0208 983 5030	Face to face workshops delivered directly to low income service users on budgeting, debt and affordable credit. Can also train community workers to deliver the workshops.
South Islington Advice Project Bemerton Children's Centre, All Saints Church, Somali Speakers Association, Islington Bangladesh Association	Free, independent, confidential legal advice on council tax, benefits, debt and bailiffs.
Islington Law Centre 38 Devonian Road, N1 8JH E <a href="mailto:info@islingtonlaw.org.uk">info@islingtonlaw.org.uk</a> T 0207 288 7630  <a href="mailto:eveningadvice@islingtonlaw.org.uk">eveningadvice@islingtonlaw.org.uk</a> 0207 288 7633 (Mon – Wed, 7-9pm)	Advice and support with debt  <a href="http://www.islingtonlaw.org.uk">www.islingtonlaw.org.uk</a>

Multiple Debt Team E <a href="mailto:multipledebtteam@islington.gov.uk">multipledebtteam@islington.gov.uk</a> T 0207 527 6161	Helps those with multiple debts to the council
National Debtline T 0808 808 4000	Charity providing debt advice.  <a href="http://www.nationaldebtline.org">www.nationaldebtline.org</a>
StepChange T 0800 138 1111	Debt charity  <a href="http://www.stepchange.org">www.stepchange.org</a>

### **Islington Debt Coalition**

Islington Debt Coalition is a partnership of local and national agencies led by Islington Council to prevent people from getting into debt and to help those already in debt

**Members:** Age UK, Christians against Poverty, Citizens Advice Islington, Circle Housing, City & Islington College, Cripplegate Foundation, Disability Action in Islington, Family Mosaic, Fair Finance, Fit Money, Help on your Doorstep, Hyde Housing Association, Islington Council, Job Centre Plus, Credit Union, Islington Housing Association Group, Islington Law Centre, Islington People's Rights, Money Advice Service, Peabody, Quaker Social Action and Voluntary Action Islington.

## Who offers advice for families?

Organisation	Support offered
Families First E <a href="mailto:ffcontacts@islington.gov.uk">ffcontacts@islington.gov.uk</a> T 020 7527 4343	Advice and support to families with school-aged children up to 19 years of age. Debt advice, help with money, benefits and grants.
Working Families E <a href="mailto:office@workingfamilies.org.uk">office@workingfamilies.org.uk</a> T 0300 012 0312 / 0207 017 0072	Free legal helpline gives families advice on in-work benefits and negotiating flexible hours to accommodate childcare arrangements.
Bright Start Islington T 020 7527 5959	Provides outreach, individual assistance and signposting services for families with children under 5.  <a href="http://www.islington.gov.uk/brightstart">www.islington.gov.uk/brightstart</a>

## Who offers support for disabled residents?

Organisation	Support offered
Remploy E <a href="mailto:Employmentservices.osc@remploy.co.uk">Employmentservices.osc@remploy.co.uk</a> T 0300 456 8110	Increase the employment opportunities for disabled people and those who face complex barriers to work.
Disability Action in Islington E <a href="mailto:info@daii.org">info@daii.org</a> T 0207 354 8925	Volunteer advice service for disabled people across a range of issues including welfare benefits
Leonard Cheshire Work and Life skills E <a href="mailto:info@LCDisability.org">info@LCDisability.org</a> T 0203 242 0200	Aimed at disabled people who are unemployed and seeking work. Offer skills, training and information.

## Who offers support for residents who rent from private landlords?

There is a single telephone number for all queries from private residents including council tax and benefits: **020 7527 3001**

## Who offers advice if you are worried about being able to pay your rent and becoming homeless?

**Council tenants** should speak to the income team at their Area Housing Office:

- Holland Walk Area Housing Team  
85-88 Holland Walk, N19 3XS  
T 0207 527 7480
- St John Street Area Housing Team  
245 St John Street, EC1V 4NB  
T 0207 527 6250
- Upper Street Area Housing Team  
222 Upper Street, N1 1XR  
T 0207 527 5300

**Partners tenants** should speak to the income team at:

- Partners  
4-6 Colebrooke Place, N1 8HZ  
T 0207 288 8310 / 0800 587 3595

**Co-ops who cover rent collection**, tenants should speak to:

- Brooke Park co-op  
T 020 7272 4457
- Charteris co-op  
T 020 7263 3804
- Harry Weston co-op  
T 020 7837 7371
- Newbury co-op  
T 07429 507163
- Elthorne 1st co-op  
T 020 7263 5756
- Halfmoon Crescent co-op  
T 020 7278 2931
- Holbrook co-op  
T 020 7272 5208
- Seaview  
E [seaviewhousing@googlemail.com](mailto:seaviewhousing@googlemail.com)

**Private tenants** should speak to: The Housing Aid Team on 0207 527 2000

## What other support is available in Islington?

Food banks, free meals and other support.

- **Breakfast Stop** – serves breakfast for 60 people, every Thursday, 10 – 12, also offers advice on individual situations including benefits.  
E [office@allsaintsislington.org](mailto:office@allsaintsislington.org)  
T 0207 837 0720
- **Food for All** – Distributes over 1000 free meals to the disadvantaged, unemployed and people suffering from mental and physical difficulties. Day centre – matchless gifts, 102 Caledonian Road  
E [foodforalluk@gmail.com](mailto:foodforalluk@gmail.com)  
T 0208 617 0499 / 0203 551 7151
- **FoodCycle Finsbury Park**, serves free 3 course meals every Saturday at 1pm in Finsbury Park Community Hub, Corker Walk, N7 7RY  
E [finsburypark@foodcycle.org.uk](mailto:finsburypark@foodcycle.org.uk)  
T 0207 729 2775
- **FoodCycle Islington**, serves a 3 course meal every Wednesday lunchtime at 1pm at the Southwood Smith Centre, 11 Southwood Smith Street, N1 0YL  
E [islington@foodcycle.org.uk](mailto:islington@foodcycle.org.uk)  
T 0207 729 2775
- **Islington foodbank** – care professionals such as doctors, health visitors, social workers, CAB and police identify those in need and issue them with a voucher to take to the foodbank to get 3 days of emergency food at Highbury Roundhouse Youth & Community Centre, 71 Ronalds Road, N5 1XB, open Monday and Saturday 2 – 5pm  
E [info@islington.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@islington.foodbank.org.uk)  
W <http://islington.foodbank.org.uk>
- **Women at the Well** – Daily food, showers, laundry facilities, toiletries and a clothing room; support and advocacy; life skills; health and wellbeing; 54-55 Birkenhead Street, WC1H 8BB  
T 0207 520 1710
- **Sure Start Maternity Grant** – one off payment of £500 if you are expecting your first child or if you are having multiple births and you already have children AND you are getting Universal Credit.
- **Free school meals & help from LEA** to cover the cost of uniforms, activities and travel to and from school
- **NHS Low Income Scheme** - Healthy start vouchers, free prescriptions, help paying for dental treatment, free sight tests and optical vouchers
- **Cold weather payments** Warm Home discount scheme (government)
- **WaterSure Plus scheme** – helping those on a low income paying water bills
- **Bus & tram discount scheme** through TFL
- **QSA Homestore** – furniture re-use scheme which provides people on low incomes with good quality used furniture at very affordable prices
- **Turn2us** – national charity that signposts people to various grant-giving organisations  
W [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)